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Top U.N. court orders Israel to halt military offensive in Rafah, though Israel is unlikely to comply

By MIKE CORDER
Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands

(AP) — The United Nations' top court ordered Israel on Friday to immediately halt its military offensive in the southern Gaza city of Rafah, but stopped short of ordering a cease-fire for the enclave. Although Israel is unlikely to comply with the order, it will ratchet up the pressure on the increasingly isolated country.

Criticism of Israel's conduct in the war in Gaza has been growing, particularly since it turned its focus to Rafah. This week alone, three European countries announced they would recognize a Palestinian state, and the chief prosecutor for another international court requested arrest warrants for Israeli leaders, along with Hamas officials.

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Presiding Judge Nawaf Salam reads the ruling of the International Court of Justice, or World Court, in The Hague, Netherlands, Friday, May 24, 2024, where the top United Nations court ruled on an urgent plea by South Africa for judges to order Israel to halt its military operations in Gaza and withdraw from the enclave.

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| LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK | | | | | | | PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|---|---|
| SUNDAY: MARRYBELL MADURO SINGER 6:30 - 8:30pm | MONDAY: ANGELA FLORES VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm | TUESDAY: JEAN PAUL SAXOPHONIST 6:30 - 8:30pm | WEDNESDAY: EDDIE KROON SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm MAILLEYN ALVARADO VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm KARAOKE 9:00 - 11:00pm | THURSDAY: MARRYBELL MADURO SINGER 6:30 - 8:30pm | FRIDAY: RICKY THOMAS GUITARIST 7:00 - 9:00pm | SATURDAY: EDDIE KROON SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm | |
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Top U.N. court orders Israel to halt military offensive in Rafah, though Israel is unlikely to comply

Continued from Front

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is also under some pressure at home to end the war, which was triggered when Hamas-led militants stormed into Israel, killing 1,200 people, most civilians, and taking roughly 250 hostage. Thousands of Israelis have joined weekly demonstrations calling on the government to reach a deal to bring the hostages home, fearing time is running out.

"The charges of genocide brought by South Africa against Israel at the International Court of Justice in the Hague are false, outrageous and morally repugnant," Netanyahu's government said in response to the ruling, maintaining its position that the military hasn't and won't target civilians.

South Africa was able to bring its case because it and Israel are signatories to the U.N.'s Genocide Convention, which includes a clause allowing the court to settle disputes over it.

Although the ruling is a blow to Israel's international standing, the court doesn't have a police force to enforce its orders. In another case on its docket, Russia has ignored the court's 2022 order to halt its full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

The sharply focused decision sent a three-pronged message to Israel, ordering a halt to the Rafah offensive, access to Gaza for war crimes investigators, and a big and immediate increase of humanitarian aid to the region, parts of which are enduring famine. Rafah is in the southernmost part of the Gaza Strip, on the border with Egypt, and over 1 million people sought refuge there in recent months after fleeing fighting elsewhere, with many of them living in teeming tent camps. Israel has been vowing for months to invade Rafah, saying it was Hamas' last major stronghold, even as several allies warned that an all-out assault would



Journalists take images of Israel legal team before Judges enter the International Court of Justice, or World Court, in The Hague, Netherlands, Friday, May 24, 2024, where the top United Nations court ruled on an urgent plea by South Africa for judges to order Israel to halt its military operations in Gaza and withdraw from the enclave.

Associated Press

spell disaster.

Israel started issuing evacuation orders about two weeks ago as it began operations on the edge of the city.

Since then, the army says an estimated 1 million people have left as forces press deeper inside.

Rafah is also home to a critical crossing for aid, and the U.N. says the flow of aid reaching it has plunged since the incursion began, though commercial trucking has continued to enter Gaza.

The court ordered Israel to keep the Rafah crossing open, saying "the humanitarian situation is now to be characterized as disastrous."

"This legally binding and very specific ruling leaves Israel with very little wiggle room," said Reed Brody, a veteran human rights lawyer and prosecutor.

Benny Gantz, a popular centrist member of Netanyahu's war cabinet, appeared to indicate that Israel would not change its course regarding Rafah.

"The State of Israel is committed to continue fighting to return its hostages and promise the security of its citizens — wherever and whenever necessary — including in Rafah," he said. "We will continue operat-

ing in accordance with international law wherever we might operate, while safeguarding to the best extent possible the civilian population. Not because of the ICJ, but because of who we are and the values we stand for."

Balkees Jarrah, associate international justice director at Human Rights Watch, said the court's order underscored the perilous situation of Palestinians in Gaza, but warned that it could be ignored if the international community doesn't use whatever leverage it can on Israel.

"The ICJ's decision opens up the possibility for relief, but only if governments use their leverage, including through arms embargoes and targeted sanctions, to press Israel to urgently enforce the court's measures," Jarrah said.

The court's president, Nawaf Salam, read out the ruling as a small group of pro-Palestinian protesters demonstrated outside.

Fears the court expressed earlier this year about an operation in Rafah have "materialized," the ruling said, and Israel must "immediately halt its military offensive" in the city and anything else that might result in conditions that could cause the "physical de-

struction in whole or in part" of Palestinians there.

But the ruling didn't call for a full cease-fire throughout Gaza, as South Africa, which has historic ties to the Palestinian people and brought the case, requested last week.

South Africa's foreign minister, Naledi Pandor, said the country's allegation that a genocide is underway is getting "stronger and stronger by the day."

"We are really pleased that the court has given very serious consideration to the matters that we put before it and has affirmed that an urgent decision is needed from the court to pause this onslaught against innocent Palestinian people," she told South African state broadcaster SABC, adding that it's now up to the U.N. Security Council to determine how to protect the Palestinians.

The cease-fire request is part of a case accusing Israel of committing genocide during its Gaza campaign. Israel vehemently denies the allegations. The case will take years to resolve, but South Africa wants interim orders to protect Palestinians while the legal wrangling continues. The court ruled Friday that Israel must ensure access for any fact-finding or in-

vestigative mission sent by the U.N. to investigate the genocide allegations.

At public hearings last week at the International Court of Justice, South Africa's ambassador to the Netherlands, Vusimuzi Madonsela, urged the panel of 15 international judges to order Israel to "totally and unconditionally withdraw" from the Gaza Strip. The court has already found that Israel's military operations pose a "real and imminent risk" to the Palestinian people.

Israel's offensive has killed more than 35,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which doesn't distinguish between combatants and civilians. The operation has obliterated entire neighborhoods, sent hundreds of thousands of people fleeing their homes, and pushed parts of the territory into famine.

"This may well be the last chance for the court to act," Irish lawyer Blinne Ní Ghrálaigh, who is part of South Africa's legal team, told judges last week.

In January, ICJ judges ordered Israel to do all it could to prevent death, destruction and any acts of genocide in Gaza, but the panel stopped short of ordering an end to the military offensive. In a second order in March, the court said Israel must take measures to improve the humanitarian situation.

The ICJ rules in disputes between nations. A few kilometers (miles) away, the International Criminal Court files charges against individuals it considers most responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

On Monday, the ICC's chief prosecutor, Karim Khan, said he has asked ICC judges to approve arrest warrants for Netanyahu, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and three top Hamas leaders — Yahya Sinwar, Mohammed Deif and Ismail Haniyeh — of war crimes and crimes against humanity in the Gaza Strip and Israel. □

Memorial Day travelers withstand higher prices in the hurry to kick off summer fun

By DAVID KOENIG
AP Airlines Writer

Widespread flight delays across the U.S. tested the patience of travelers who tried to get a jump start on Memorial Day weekend, but the relatively few canceled flights raised hopes that airlines would be able to handle the bigger crowds expected Friday. The Transportation Security Administration predicted that Friday will be the busiest day for air travel over the long holiday weekend, with nearly 3 million people expected to pass through airport checkpoints.

On Thursday, the TSA screened just under 2.9 million people, coming within about 11,000 of breaking the record set on the Sunday after Thanksgiving last year.

"Airports are going to be more packed than we have seen in 20 years," AAA spokesperson Aixa Diaz said.

Highways also are likely to be jammed the next few days as motorists head out of town and then return home.

AAA predicted this will be the busiest start-of-summer weekend in nearly 20 years, with 43.8 million people ex-



Travelers wait at a TSA checkpoint at Miami International Airport, Thursday, May 23, 2024, in Miami.
Associated Press

pected to roam at least 50 miles from home between Thursday and Monday with 38 million of them taking vehicles.

The annual expression of wanderlust that accompanies the start of the summer travel season is happening at a time when Americans tell pollsters they are worried about the economy and the direction of the country.

"Memorial Day is a holiday

weekend. I get to hang with family and friends, so I'd say that's priceless, right?" Nene Efebo said during a two-hour wait for a delayed flight at Denver International Airport. "Anything to hang out with family and friends." Some travelers reported experiencing sticker shock when they booked their trips. Upon arriving at Philadelphia International Airport, Ciarra Marsh said

the city "was not our original destination, but we chose here because it was cheaper."

At Chicago's O'Hare Airport, Larisa Latimer of New Lenox, Illinois, said her airfare was reasonable but other expenses for a getaway to New Orleans were not.

"I just have to make the accommodation," she said. "The rental car is up ... this year, the hotel accommo-

dations were very unusually expensive." Kathy Larko of Fort Myers, Florida, used frequent-flyer miles and some flexible scheduling to pay for her trip to Chicago.

"I'm really conscious of looking at the cost of the entire trip. We're staying a little farther out than we normally would" to get a lower hotel rate, she said. "We're also flying back a day later, because we could get cheaper miles."

More than 8,700 flights were delayed Thursday, with the biggest backups in the New York City area; Charlotte, North Carolina; Boston; and at Dallas-Fort Worth International and Chicago's O'Hare Airport.

The numbers improved with more favorable weather Friday, with fewer than 2,000 delays nationwide by midday on the East Coast. The weekend's highway traffic and crowded airports could be a sample of what is to come. U.S. airlines expect to carry a record number of passengers this summer.

Their trade group estimates that 271 million travelers will fly between June 1 and August 31, breaking the record of 255 million set you guessed it last summer. □

Democratic senators request meeting with Chief Justice Roberts over flags flown at Alito's homes

By MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Two Democratic senators are requesting a meeting with Chief Justice John Roberts after reports that two separate flags carried by rioters at the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol had flown outside of houses owned by Justice Samuel Alito.

Senate Judiciary Chairman Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse, D-R.I., a member of the Judiciary panel, wrote Roberts on Thursday asking him for a meeting to discuss Supreme Court ethics and to take steps to ensure that

Alito recuses himself from any cases before the court concerning the Jan. 6 attack or former President Donald Trump's attempts to overturn his 2020 election defeat.

"We request a meeting with you as soon as possible, in your capacity as Chief Justice and as presiding officer of the Judicial Conference of the United States, to discuss additional steps to address the Supreme Court's ethics crisis," Durbin and Whitehouse wrote to Roberts in a letter released Friday by both offices.

The senators' letter comes as another conservative

justice, Clarence Thomas, has ignored calls to recuse himself from cases related to the 2020 election over his wife, Ginni Thomas', support for Trump and as public trust in the Supreme Court is at its lowest point in at least 50 years.

The court did not respond to a request for comment regarding the letter.

The court is considering two major cases related to the Capitol attack, including charges faced by the rioters and whether Trump has immunity from prosecution on election interference charges. □



Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito pauses after swearing in Mark Esper as Secretary of Defense during a ceremony with President Donald Trump in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington, July 23, 2019.

Associated Press

More severe weather moves through Midwest as Iowa residents clean up tornado damage

By ISABELLA O'MALLEY and HANNAH FINGERHUT

Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) —

Several tornadoes were reported in Iowa and Illinois as storms downed power lines and trees on Friday, just days after a deadly twister devastated one small town.

The large storm system began overnight in Nebraska before traveling across central Iowa and into Illinois. A weak tornado touched down in suburban Des Moines, according to the National Weather Service, which was also assessing damage from several other reported twisters south of Iowa City and near Moline, Illinois. No injuries or deaths were reported.

The storm also brought rain that was heavy in some areas of Iowa, where totals have reached as much as 8 inches (20 centimeters) over the last week, according to the weather service. Also Friday, a church caught fire in Madison, Wisconsin, as a thunderstorm rolled through the area. Nate Moll, who lives two doors down from Holy Redeemer Catholic Church, said he heard a "zap zap zap" electrical sound, followed by a loud crack of thunder. Firefighters extinguished the blaze.



A tornado damaged car sits in a pile of debris, Thursday, May 23, 2024, in Greenfield, Iowa.

Associated Press

In Oklahoma, a tornado was on the ground for about an hour Thursday evening in Jackson County and neighboring counties as a slow-moving storm moved through, according to Ryan Bunker, a meteorologist with the weather service's Norman, Oklahoma, office. News outlets reported downed power lines and outages and damage to some structures.

Severe weather was expected in areas around the U.S. throughout the long Memorial Day weekend, with a strong risk of torna-

does on Saturday in the Great Plains, particularly Kansas and Oklahoma. In New Mexico, strong winds and low humidity could fuel wildfires.

"It's really important if you have outdoor plans to make sure that you remain aware of approaching thunderstorms," said Matt Elliott, warning coordination meteorologist with the weather service's Storm Prediction Center.

"May is the peak time of year for tornadoes and for severe weather across the United States," Elliott said.

The latest severe weather comes as residents of Greenfield, Iowa, a community of about 2,000 people, have been cleaning up after a strong tornado on Tuesday. Friday's storm system inflicted heavy rains, dime-sized hail and wind gusts of 75 mph (121 kph) on a community still recovering after four people were killed and 35 others injured when a tornado destroyed more than 100 homes and hit a nearby wind farm.

Among those killed were Dean and Pam Wiggins,

said their grandson Tom Wiggins.

On Thursday, he tried to find any of his grandparents' mementos that remained after the tornado demolished their home, leaving little more than its foundation. He described them as "incredibly loved by not only our family but the entire town."

Not far away, Bill Yount was cleaning up.

"It's like somebody took a bomb," said Yount, gesturing to the land covered with wood, debris, trees stripped of their leaves, heavy machinery and equipment to clean up the mess.

He waited out the storm in a closet.

The National Weather Service determined that three separate powerful tornadoes carved paths totaling 130 miles (209 kilometers) across Iowa on Tuesday. In addition to tornadoes, Saturday's storms could bring extremely large hail, according to Elliott with the Storm Prediction Center. The risk of strong tornadoes, large hail and damaging winds shifts into parts of Missouri, Illinois, Indiana and Kentucky on Sunday. On Monday, the Mid-Atlantic region could see some severe thunderstorms. □

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin to undergo procedure at Walter Reed, will transfer power to deputy

By TARA COPP
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin will undergo a medical procedure at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center Friday evening and will transfer power temporarily to his deputy, Pentagon press secretary Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder said in a statement.

Austin is continuing to deal with bladder issues that arose in December following his treatment for prostate cancer, Ryder said.

The procedure is elective and minimally invasive, "is not related to his cancer diagnosis and has had no effect on his excellent cancer prognosis," the press secretary said.

Austin will transfer authority to Deputy Secretary of Defense Kathleen Hicks while he is indisposed, the Pentagon said.

Austin, 70, has had ongoing health issues since undergoing surgery to address a prostate cancer diagnosis. He spent two weeks in the hospital following compli-

cations from a prostatectomy.

Austin faced criticism at the time for not immediately informing the president or Congress of either his diagnosis or hospitalization.

Austin was taken back to Walter Reed in February for a bladder issue, admitted to intensive care for a second time and underwent a non-surgical procedure under general anesthesia at the time.

The Pentagon has notified the White House and Congress, Ryder said. □



Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin smiles after members of the media are asked to leave following a meeting with Kenya's President William Ruto at the Pentagon in Washington, Friday, May 24, 2024.

Associated Press

Young missionary couple from U.S. among 3 killed by gunmen in Haiti's capital, police say

By DÁNICA COTO and
EVENS SANON

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)

— A U.S. missionary couple was shot and killed by criminal gang members in Haiti's capital after they were abducted while leaving a youth group activity held at a local church, according to a police official and a religious group.

A third person also was killed during the attack Thursday evening in the community of Lizon in northern Port-au-Prince, Lionel Lazare, head of a Haitian police union, told The Associated Press on Friday.

The slayings occurred as the capital crumbles under the relentless assault of violent gangs that control 80% of Port-au-Prince while authorities await the arrival of a police force from Kenya as part of a U.N.-backed deployment aimed at quelling gang violence in the troubled Caribbean country.

Two of the victims were a young married couple, Davy and Natalie Lloyd, according to a Facebook posting from Natalie Lloyd's father, Missouri state Rep. Ben Baker. The name of the third person killed wasn't immediately available.

"My heart is broken in a thousand pieces," Baker wrote on Facebook on Thursday. "I've never felt this kind of pain. Most of



A bus passes by a police officer on patrol near the airport in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Friday, May 24, 2024.

Associated Press

you know my daughter and son-in-law Davy and Natalie Lloyd are full time missionaries in Haiti. They were attacked by gangs this evening and were both killed. They went to Heaven together."

The U.S. State Department said Friday it was aware of the killings. "We offer our sincerest condolences to the family on their loss. We stand ready to provide all appropriate consular assistance. Out of respect for the family during this difficult time, we have no further comment," the agency said.

The couple worked for Missions in Haiti Inc. The Claremore, Oklahoma, organization was founded by David and Alicia Lloyd, Davy Lloyd's parents. Natalie Lloyd's Facebook page said the couple married on June 18, 2022, and she began working with the missionary organization in August 2022. She frequently posted photos of Haitian children on her page. The mission did not immediately respond to a request for comment. It runs a school in Lizon for more than 240 students that it opened in September 2008,

according to its website. A Facebook posting on the Missions for Haiti page late Thursday stated that Davy and Natalie, along with children, were leaving a church when "they were ambushed by a gang of 3 trucks full of guys." The posting said Davy Lloyd was taken to a house, where he was tied up and beaten. The post later said that Davy, Natalie and a third person, listed only as Jude, were at the house when shooting broke out. It said that gang members "shot all the windows out of the house and continue to

shoot. Their lives are in danger."

Three hours later, another posting from Missions in Haiti read: "Around midnight: Davy and Natalie and Jude were shot and killed by the gang about 9 o'clock this evening. We all are devastated."

It wasn't immediately clear which gang or gangs were responsible for the fatal shootings.

However, a gang leader called Chyen Mechan, which means "mean dog" in Haitian Creole, controls the area where the shooting occurred. His real name is Claudy Célestin, and he is a dismissed civil servant from Haiti's Ministry of the Interior.

The leader of another gang known as General Jeff also controls territory near the neighborhood where the couple was killed. Both gangs are part of a coalition known as Viv Ansanm, which means "Live Together."

The coalition is responsible for launching large-scale attacks on key government infrastructure starting Feb. 29. Gunmen have attacked police stations, opened fire on the main international airport that remained closed for nearly three months before opening earlier this week and stormed Haiti's two biggest prisons, releasing more than 4,000 inmates. □

U.N. countries adopt treaty to better trace origins of genetic resources under global patent system

GENEVA (AP) — U.N. member countries on Friday concluded a new treaty to ensure that genetic resources used in inventions, like new medicines derived from exotic plants in the Andes mountains, are properly traced.

It marks the first time the 193 member states of the U.N.'s World Intellectual Property Organization have agreed that patent applicants must disclose the origin of genetic resources used and traditional knowledge linked to them — often from indigenous cultures that have long been exploited by colonists, traders and others.

The treaty will, for example, require companies in industries like fashion, luxury

goods and pharmaceuticals to specify the origin of the plant-based chemicals in medicines or skin creams that they use for their innovative products. About 30 countries already have similar rules on their national books.

The treaty doesn't address the thornier issue of compensation to Indigenous communities for their historic even ancient expertise about things like tropical plants. But the accord is seen as an important first international step. It requires patent applicants, like foreign entrepreneurs or international companies, to specify where they got ideas about what goes into their products. □



Andean farmers take part in a ceremony honoring Mother Earth and Father Snowy Mountain, in Pitumarca, Peru, April 4, 2018.

Associated Press

Efforts to draft a pandemic treaty falter as countries disagree on how to respond to next emergency

By JAMEY KEATEN and MARIA CHENG

Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — A global treaty to fight pandemics like COVID is going to have to wait: After more than two years of negotiations, rich and poor countries have failed for now to come up with a plan for how the world might respond to the next pandemic.

After COVID-19 triggered once-unthinkable lockdowns, upended economies and killed millions, leaders at the World Health Organization and worldwide vowed to do better in the future. In 2021, member countries asked the U.N. health agency to oversee negotiations to figure out how the world might better share scarce resources and stop future viruses from spreading globally.

On Friday, Roland Driese, co-chair of WHO's negotiating board for the agreement, acknowledged that countries were unable to come up with a draft. WHO had hoped a final draft treaty could be agreed on at its yearly meeting of health ministers starting Monday in Geneva.



The logo of the World Health Organization is seen at the WHO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, June 11, 2019.

"We are not where we hoped we would be when we started this process," he said, adding that finalizing an international agreement on how to respond to a pandemic was critical "for the sake of humanity." Driese said the World Health Assembly next week would take up lessons from its work and plot the way forward, urging par-

ticipants to make "the right decisions to take this process forward" to one day reach a pandemic agreement "because we need it." The draft treaty had attempted to address the gap that occurred between COVID-19 vaccines in rich and poorer countries, which WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom

Ghebreyesus said amounted to "a catastrophic moral failure."

Addressing a sullen final day of negotiations, the WHO chief insisted, "This is not a failure."

"We will try everything believing that anything is possible and make this happen because the world still needs a pandemic treaty," he said. "Because many of

Associated Press

the challenges that caused a serious impact during COVID-19 still exist."

The accord's aim was to set guidelines for how the WHO's 194 member countries might stop future pandemics and better share resources. But experts warned there were virtually no consequences for countries that don't comply.

The co-chairs of the treaty-drafting process didn't specify what caused the logjam, but diplomats have said vast differences remained over sharing of information about pathogens that emerge and the sharing of technologies to fight them.

The latest draft had proposed that WHO should get 20% of the production of pandemic-related products like tests, treatments and vaccines and urges countries to disclose their deals with private companies.

Earlier this month, U.S. Republican senators wrote to the Biden administration, arguing that the draft treaty focused on issues like "shredding intellectual property rights" and "supercharging the WHO.□

Thai town maddened by marauding monkeys launches plan to lock them up and send them away

By JERRY HARMER
Associated Press

LOPBURI, Thailand (AP) — A Thai town, run ragged by its ever-growing population of

marauding wild monkeys, launched an offensive against the simian raiders on Friday, using trickery and ripe tropical fruit.



A monkey eats rambutan on a sign in Lopburi Province, north of Bangkok, Thailand, Friday, May 24, 2024.

Associated Press

Several high-profile cases of monkey-human conflict recently convinced authorities in Lopburi in central Thailand that they had to reduce the animals' numbers. If all goes well, most will end up behind bars, before starting a new life elsewhere.

The first stage of the plan, instituted Friday, is to bait cages with the animals' favorite food, then wait for hunger to get the better of their natural caution.

There was early success for the catchers on one street, with three of the macaques falling for the ruse and ending up trapped because they had fancied a taste of rambutan fruit. The cages

had been placed on the street earlier in the week so the monkeys got used to them and found them less threatening.

There are thought to be around 2,500 monkeys running around the town. The capture of the unlucky trio and around 30 others trapped in other parts of the town -- slightly pared down that total.

The effort will go on for five days this month, then is likely to be repeated. Some of the monkeys will be left free to maintain Lopburi's image as Thailand's monkey town.

But no one is expecting it to be easy.

"With the monkey's intel-

ligence, if some of them go into the cage and are caught, the others outside won't enter the cage to get the food because they've already learnt what's happened to their friends," said Patarapol Maneeorn from Thailand's Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation.

The roaming monkeys have long been a symbol of the town, 140 kilometers (90 miles) north of Bangkok, and are a major tourist draw. They've become increasingly aggressive, however, with several videos of them snatching food from residents and causing injuries being widely shared online.□

Don't forget to visit Aruba's famous Red Anchor

At the south east coast of the island, standing alone on a windswept and barren land stands a popular Aruba landmark – a large anchor. It overlooks the sea just beyond, watching over the shipping lanes. It stands there in memory and in honor of all seamen who have lost their life at sea.

Where to Find the Anchor?

The anchor is a "must see" landmark when you visit Aruba. It is among the most photographed historical landmarks for the island. You want to make sure you add this stop on your itinerary when your visiting the south coast of Aruba. The bright red anchor against the backdrop of the deep blue Caribbean sea and the azure blue skies, make a great backdrop for your vacation pictures.

The anchor is located at the entrance to Gate 6 to the former Lago Colony. It is on the outskirts of Seroe Colorado, on the south east point of the island at the "T" junction to Baby Beach.

Depending on where you are staying on the island, follow the signs that indicate the way to Baby Beach. Once you reach the T-junction, it will be right in front of you.

About the Anchor

Size

It will be hard to miss the anchor, it's huge! The anchor that weighs 21,772 kilos, is approximately 10 feet 6 inches wide and 15 feet, 6 inches tall.

On the anchor there are some numbers. The 4112 and 4115, which are believed to be the serial numbers that refer to the "fluke" or horizontal and vertical parts of the anchor, respectively. The number 21772K refers to the weight of the anchor in kilos.

This type of anchor was manufactured by Hoesch Dortmund Horde, at a foundry located in Germany.

Where did the Anchor Come From?

There are a number of stories as to the origins of the anchor, which one do you think it was? (Unfortunately the mystery has never been solved, so your imagination can pick which one you think it might be!)

Story 1:

"According to Mr. Manuel M. Curiel, an ex-Lago Tug Captain, a fully laden VLCC (Very Large Crude Carrier) was seeking a mooring at the 15-mile anchorage, known as Bara, on the southern part of



The Red Anchor situated at the entrance of former Lago Colony in San Nicolas

the island. This is the usual shallow mooring location for ships awaiting orders, etc. The weather was rough with strong current. The normal procedure is that they would walk out three shackles (about 90 feet) until the anchor touches the bottom while the chain must rest on the bottom. Subsequently, they will walk out some extra shackles and when the ship starts to swing or lean on one side, the anchor is properly set. Because of the rough weather, unfortunately they did not get the time to walk out the extra tackles and because of the tension exerted on the winch, it broke, and they lost the anchor and its chain."

Story 2:

"Mr. Curiel also said that at one time a small tanker with a Korean crew, while lifting their anchor also lifted another anchor near the inner harbor. When the ship asked for assistance, he went with his tugboat along with a barge, to help. But eventually they had to cut the chain and let the anchor go to the bottom because they could not untangle them."

How Did The Anchor Become a Landmark?

Sometime between 1980 and 1985, three gentlemen (Mr. Wim Martinus – the Harbormaster of Aruba;

Mr. August Genser – the ex-Division Superintendent of Lago's Laboratory; and Mr. Willie Davis – Owner of Filtec at Zeewijk in San Nicolas), were having a conversation with Mr. Charlie Brouns Jr. at his famous Charlie's Bar and Restaurant in San Nicolas. Charlie, who was a visionary and had dreams for developing the San Nicolas area, told these gentlemen that he would like to come up with something innovative for the San Nicolas area to draw tourism to the area.

The "anchor", which at that time was being stored at the Oranjestad harbor, was suggested as an option. Charlie liked the idea! He then contacted the President of Lago for permission to acquire the anchor. He was granted permission and the anchor was then re-located to its present location and dedicated "To All Seamen" on the occasion of the closing of the Lago Oil Refinery on March 31, 1985.

Through the Years

Through the years the Anchor was slowly weathering from the wind and salt. As time passed, sadly the origin and purpose of the anchor slowly faded away from people's memories.

After Charles Brouns Jr died on September 15, 2004, his friend Mr. Sam

Speziale, requested assistance from the management of Valero Aruba Refinery to help maintain the monument. The Valero Aruba Refinery, graciously sandblasted and painted the anchor and poured a concrete pad around it. On April 17, 2005, the anchor monument was rededicated "To All Seamen" in a formal ceremony in memory of Charles Brouns Jr.

Today, the anchor stands both as memorial to all seaman who have lost their lives at sea, but also as a silent reminder that Seroe Colorado is part of San Nicolas and that San Nicolas is still a vibrant and important part of the island of Aruba.

The Best Time to Visit

When you're planning your visit to the south end of the island, you will want to include in your itinerary the many things to see and do there. The anchor will be just one of these stops, (keep an eye out for our future editions, we publish our recommendations!).

With that being said, I have to say, if you enjoy catching a sunrise, the anchor is one of the best places on the island to catch the sunrise. But in reality, anytime is a good time to visit, depending on your personal schedule. □

Weekly Free Slot or Table Play for all qualified Club members.

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Papiamento words and phrases you may want to know!

(Oranjestad)—Aruba is a melting pot of different nationalities, cultures and languages. For this reason, the average Aruban can understand and speak Dutch, English and Spanish relatively well. However, as much as we pride ourselves in being able to communicate with almost everyone, we cherish our native tongue Papiamento above all else. This week marked a big anniversary for us, as we celebrated the day Papiamento was recognized as an official language on the island on May 21th 2003.

Papiamento was born out of a necessity for survival during a period of colonial conflict. In this process, the development of Papiamento was necessary, and for a very long time, the language carried the identity of the indigenous and African inhabitants of the ABC sister islands (Aruba, Curacao, Bonaire), as it was used on a day to day basis for communication. At the same time, Papiamento intertwined itself with a range of different languages from other cultures, including their love and respect. Consequently, Papiamento reflects organic multilingualism and multiculturalism,

which makes it a flexible, dynamic and resilient language.

Want to learn some common words in our language? Here are a few basic words and phrases that help you get familiarized with the Aruban culture. When you arrive at the airport in Aruba, one of the first words in Papiamento you may encounter is "Bon bini." Bon bini in Papiamento means welcome, and is probably the most famous Papiamento word for tourists.

Hi! Bye!

To be fair, there is no unique way to say "hello" in Papiamento. At least, not officially. We often just use the English "hello" or "hey", or Dutch "hallo" to greet someone. We do however, always follow it up with "con bay?" or "con ta?" Con bay is a shortened version of "con ta bay?" which essentially means "how are you?" The word "con" in Papiamento means "how?" and is pronounced with a rounder "o" sounds, like in the English word "cone". "Ta bay" refers to how you are doing.

When we say goodbye, we use the word "ayo" (not like the Ayo Rock Formation, but also... kinda?). We may

also use "te oro", which means "see you later".

Greetings during the day

Most, if not all, languages have different ways to greet according to the time of day, and Papiamento is no different. Since Papiamento is heavily influenced by Portuguese and Spanish, some of these phrases may look very familiar.

1. Bon dia is used in the morning, up to about noon. Bon dia essentially means good morning. The word "bon" means "good", and while "dia" does not directly mean "morning" in English, it is used often to refer to the morning time.

2. Bon tardi. In the afternoon to early evening hours, we use "bon tardi" to greet people, which means "good afternoon". "Tardi" actually comes from the word "atardi", which directly translates to "afternoon". However, the shortened "tardi" is used to keep the rhythm on the phrase. And the same could be said for our last greeting of the day.

3. Bon nochi. You guessed it, "bon nochi" means "good night". Just like "tardi", "nochi" is actually the shortened version of the word "anochi".

Yes...no...maybe?

The affirmative and negative expression is very simple in Papiamento. Just like Spanish, our yeses are "si" and our no's are "no". Pretty easy right? If you want to gain some extra points from younger locals, you can also say "se", which is a more casual affirmative used mostly by the younger generation. However, do note: some older generations may find this improper and not respectful, so keep that in mind.

Thanks man...

Lastly, a word that we can always say more often is "danki", which means "thank you". "Danki" is derived from the Dutch word "bedankt". Though we don't really have a translation for "I appreciate it" in English, we do use "masha danki" to convey the message. "Masha" means "a lot" or "very", so "masha danki" means "thank you very much". □

Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at the Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The honorees were respectively honored with a certificate for their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three levels of honor are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years con-

secutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Goodwill Ambassadors
Mr. Shane & Mrs. Shari Bench from Sarasota Florida, United States.

Mr. Jorgino Willems representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of the Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort bestowed the certificate to the honorees, presented them with gifts, and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite

vacation destination, as their home away from home.

The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

- Aruba's people.
- Aruba's beach.
- Aruba's weather.
- Aruba's very safe.
- "Bucuti's hospitality"

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island". □

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Hungry Piranha - Pizza, Wings & More | Twist of Flavors
The Lazy Lizard | Dunkin Donuts | Shalom Hair & Nails Bar
Magnet Perfume Jewelry & Cosmetics



Heart-Centered Leadership Foundation will participate in the "Appeltje van Oranje"

Heart-Centered Leadership Foundation (HCLF) is one of the 10 candidates from the Dutch Caribbean that can win the prestigious 'Appeltje van Oranje'. The theme of this year is 'fighting loneliness together' and HCLF's initiative 'Heart-Centered Impact Coaches' has been selected as one of the candidates. This is the second time in two years that HCLF will be part of Appeltje van Oranje after reaching the final round in 2022.

Appeltje van Oranje is an annual award that recognizes initiatives in the Dutch kingdom that make a difference in the community. Each year, it recognizes and rewards 3 initiatives in the social area that are creative and unique, standing for inclusivity and an involved society.

The theme of this year puts emphasis on initiatives working together to combat loneliness. HCLF's initiative, Heart-

Centered Impact Coaches, is among the candidates highlighted for their efforts to combat loneliness among young people. The group of coaches consists of adult volunteers between 18 and 30 years old who undergo training and support young people during various interactive activities organized by HCLF.

The phase of youth is not an easy one. A young person encounters many challenges in their growth that hinder their complete formation into an authentic adult, firm in their support and engaged in society. One of the challenges is that even if they have a large group of friends, a young person can still feel lonely. The feeling of loneliness can lead to mental health challenges. For the young person who feels lonely, without anyone to connect with, the coaches provide attention and a listening ear without judgment.

The difference in the initiative lies in the connection that the Heart-Centered Impact Coaches create with young people and among themselves as young adults. With young people, they ensure a safe space for self-expression and an inclusive environment to support each other. For themselves as young adults, they meet other volunteers who share the same purpose or goal, form connections, exchange experiences and opportunities, and motivate each other to be the best version of themselves. An example of their motivation and connection is how they come up with activities for young people and for themselves, such as a mindfulness hike and a personal growth session for young people.

Heart-Centered Impact Coaches have been present in more than 30 sessions for young people, helping HCLF reach 400 young people with



its programs in 2023. In the first 4 months of 2024, the Heart-Centered Impact Coaches have already connected with young people in 20 sessions.

sive community, where every young person feels valued and empowered.

About HCLF:

Heart-Centered Leadership Foundation (HCLF) is a foundation established in 2008 with the goal of inspiring and empowering young people in Aruba. Since 2012, the foundation has been offering various workshops, activities, and seminars where young people have the opportunity to develop their character and skills, strengthening their personal and professional development. □



The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Distinguished Visitors of Aruba. The honorees were respectively honored with a certificate for their years of visits, loyalty, and

love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who

Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa Aruba!

have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three levels of honor are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10+ years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador (20+ years consecutively visiting Aruba)

Emerald Ambassador (35+ years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Distinguished Visitors
Mr. Michael & Barbara Mucciaccio from Dedham Massachusetts, United States.

Mr. Jorgino Willems representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of the Manchebo Beach Resort & Spa Aruba bestowed the certificate upon the honorees, presented them with gifts, and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination, as their home away from home.

The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

- Aruba's people.
- Aruba's beach.
- Aruba's weather.
- "Relax & Recharge"
- "Out of the US into the Caribbean"

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island". □

Birds of Aruba



ORANJESTAD — On May 11th, 2010, the Aruba Birdlife Conservation was founded with the aim of protecting the biodiversity in general and birds in and around Aruba in particular.

Among other things, the foundation will focus on increasing the survival chances of species of wild birds by promoting their preservation and conservation. The foundation publishes the most beautiful pictures of local birds on their social media that show us the beauty of Aruba's birds and nature in general. Aruba Today gives you a little peek with the following pictures and



descriptions from the foundations Facebook page.

The Great Egret

Serenity in Aruba's National Park, a Great Egret flying in peace. When it is peaceful and quite, beautiful things start happening in nature.

Canadian in the house

The breeding season is over and it's getting pretty cold in North America. Shore birds have started moving southwards as early as July. This wetland beauty wants to keep its toes warm.



Our Canadian friends know exactly where they can do so best. A Greater Yellowlegs rediscovering Aruba's Bubali Wetlands.

Cabochon

In its living form of so much more value than any gemstone. Aruba's smallest and most master of flight. A top pollinator. A hovering Blenchi inspecting the human who just entered his territory.

English: Blue-tailed Emerald (male) Dutch: Blauwstaartsmaragdkolibrie (mannetje). Aruba's to enjoy. Aruba's to protect. □

CXXIX- 129 - Legislation against global warming

NOORD - Citizens of Aruba are at that point where they must determine character and make an unconditional choice for the future by demanding responsible governance. Considering the demographics and geophysical limitations of its small territory, smart choices long term benefits. Operating objectives of Etnia Nativa's initiative is to share our collective native folkloric experience and field observations. A spiritual respect for Mother Nature is our promotion. Encourage awareness of true elemental values as

well as benefits in proven Scientific and Technological solutions for an eco-conscious society.

Aruba's fragile nature is under various threat. The lack of regulations and the non-enforcement of those in force has proven to generate disastrous results, accidents made to happen.

Our concern is the destruction of our topsoil and complete depletion of it's essential nutrient dispensing network which spread humidity evenly during heavy

rains, grateful to be spared outside of the so-called hurricane belt, however, razing piece of land is very tragic for Aruba is like an natural disasters. This devastation reached its tipping point. A sign of overcrowding, destruction of nature, and stress will also increase the cost of healthcare, business, security and souring cost of energy whit rising temperatures.

Our island waste impasse deserves a creative solution and pragmatic intervention. In our experiment with recycling, we built all of our facilities. A project that incorporated materials collected in all phases of its construction process. The same was applied in the construction of artifacts, furniture and works of art that are part of the decoration and lectures, such as lamps, masks, shells and bones, feathers and seeds, etc. less garbage in to landfills

We promote the planting of trees, local trees in particular, In order to fight back desertification and rising areal



temperature. We actively support such actively as volunteers.

We emphasized on issues such as market saturation, loss of charm. Quality over quantity mindset. Reintegration of the youth in the tourist service industry. Repatriation of the less demanding and under educated foreign workerforces towards recovery and beyond. Reforming fiscal sythem and eniviormental custodian, paving way towards a ho-

listic sustainable economy. Global Warming must be taken very serious and personal, hence everyperson could offer it's grain of sand of contribution, Lets become a suscesful study case an example in natural recovery, mitigate the cost of fossil energy and combat the intensifying heat.

To get to know more about Aruba's origins, flora, fauna and cultural heritage, we recommend this private cultural encounter session that has been educating participants for decades. Mail us at etnianativa03@gmail.com or Whatsapp +297 592 2702 for an amazing native hour. □



Article by: Etnia Nativa

Whatsapp us +297 592 2702 and book your Aruban experience

Etnia Nativa is close to the high rise hotels



The district of Savaneta

A quick history guide to the island's first capital

(Oranjestad)—Before Oranjestad became the island nation's capital, Aruba's first capital was the district of Savaneta. Here is where the cultural identity of Aruba was born, and from where the rest of the island developed into what it is today.

Savaneta is said to have been the first place where the Caquetio inhabitants first stepped foot on the island. Though there isn't hard evidence to back this up, but considering the legend of the Cacique Arua, it is believed that there were already movements on Aruba—and Savaneta—around 88 AD.

The Caquetios probably made their way to the island either from Venezuela, Colombia or other Caribbean islands in the region, but with good weather it was relatively easy for them to travel back and forth in their canoes. So, since the Caquetios discovered the island, Aruba found her first form of civilization.

It wasn't until 1499 when Aruba met another group of people who set foot on the island: the Spanish explorer Alonso de Ojeda. De Ojeda first took notice of Aruba off the coast of Venezuela, during his exploration of the Latin American country. This was on August 9th, 1499. However, de Ojeda didn't actually sail to the island till 4 days later, on August 23rd, 1499. This was the beginning of the Spanish era on Aruba (1499-1636).

Alonso usually didn't stop at every island or land he saw, especially not in the Caribbean. He would often take notice of land from afar and continue sailing. However,

Aruba was an exception. He had heard that there were "quebracho" trees on the island, which were commonly used to produce dye or paint. But since these trees could not be found in Savaneta, he continued to search in the area of what is now known as Santa Cruz. The best way to transport the tree barks was via a route passing through Savaneta, and so the first road between Savaneta and Santa Cruz was made.

The Dutch colonial era (1636-1805)

During the 80-year war between The Netherlands and Spain, Dutch explorers and merchants began to travel to the ABC islands. Once they landed in Aruba, they deported the small Arawakan and Spanish community that was living on the island. This was the beginning of colonization of the ABC islands by the Dutch empire. Around the same, the West Indian Company (WIC) was born. Bonaire and Curacao were mostly used for plantations, where the Dutch had transported slaves from Africa. Aruba, on the other hand, was mostly used to raise cattle and to house the haring factory. The Dutch had often forced the indigenous community to work for them.

In 1636, when the Netherlands won the war against Spain, the country surrendered the islands to the Dutch.

The Dutch administration appointed the island's first commander, an Irish man named N. Williams. Because the Dutch were interested in other Caribbean islands and countries in South America, they imported Dutch merchants and business



Commandeursbaai (Commander's Bay) at Savaneta

men, all of whom resided in Savaneta. This way, Savaneta officially became the island's first capital.

However, at the end of the 18th century, the commander at the time, J.R. Lauffer, moved his office to what is now "Horse Bay" in Oranjestad. Because the highest office on the island moved away from Savaneta, the capital lost its title to what was called then Playa.

How Savaneta got its name

The name Savaneta probably has a Spanish origin. It was said that when the Spanish climbed a hill called Yara, they saw that the area was mostly open and had no big trees. In Spanish, such a land area is called a "sabana".

Because of its land surface, Sava-

neta was a great place to construct cattle farms. From here, the farmer culture on Aruba was born. Before the Aruban Gold Rush and the construction of the Refinery in San Nicolas, most residents were farmers, and Savaneta had many inhabitants that farmed fruits and vegetables. They also continued the tradition of raising cattle, like goat, sheep, pigs and horses. Savaneta was one of the first places on the island to have a general farming culture. From this culture, many other traditions were born, like the Dera Gay Holiday that we celebrate every year on June 24th.□

Source: Historia di Savaneta (History of Savaneta) by Adolf "Dufi" Kock.



Alonso de Ojeda



"Quebracho" (Kibrahacha) tree; used to make dye and paint

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS 39 Baseball

1 Work group

6 White House

workers

11 Cruise ship

12 Computer command

13 Trig topic

14 Cut's counter-part

15 Honked

17 "— we there yet?"

18 Do the wrong thing

19 Sideways

22 Squid's home

23 Cloverleaf part

24 Wild party

25 Curly-coated dog

27 Fan sound

30 Way of thinking

31 Need to pay

32 Pole worker

33 Clinic worker

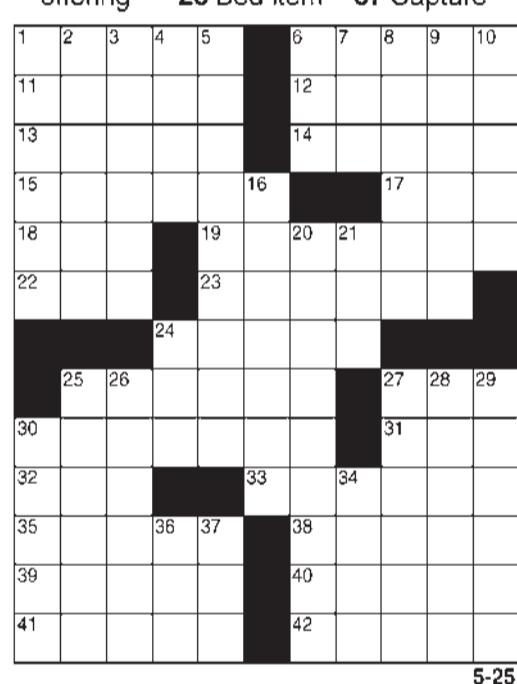
35 Visitor from afar

38 Similar



Yesterday's answer

| DOWN | 1 Lists of candidates | 8 Win over | 26 Blazing |
|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 2 Cassiterite, e.g. | 9 Snare | 27 Edible | spirals |
| 3 Wool variety | 10 Girder material | 28 Roused | 29 Galileo's crime |
| 4 Hat material | 20 Sticky-toed creatures | 30 Ham and lamb | 34 Thunder sound |
| 5 Sponges | 21 Lobed organ | 36 Pitcher's stat | 37 Capture |
| 6 Phone download | 24 Piston | | |
| 7 S&L offering | 25 Bed item | | |



5-25

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-25 CRYPTOQUOTE

H A U Y ' V R L M D L Y S C L A
R L C H V Z . V R D S F H W R V C D C L A
R L C H V Z B U K U V R D K J D U J Q D ,
C T V V R D S ' K D L Q Q K H W R V B U K
F D . — D T C H D C Q L I D

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: THERE'S NO GREATER GIFT THAN THINKING THAT YOU HAD SOME IMPACT ON THE WORLD, FOR THE BETTER.— GLORIA STEINEM

Cruise ship Schedule: May 01 - May 28 2024

| | | | | | | |
|-----|----|-----------------------|-------|-------|---|---|
| TUE | 07 | CARNIVAL MAGIC | 09.00 | 22.00 | C | 1 |
| TUE | 14 | ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS | 08.00 | 21.00 | B | 1 |
| | | CARNIVAL HORIZON | 08.00 | 22.00 | C | 1 |
| WED | 15 | RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS | 09.00 | 21.00 | C | 1 |
| TUE | 21 | CELEBRITY BEYOND | 08.00 | 21.00 | B | 1 |
| | | CARNIVAL VISTA | 13.00 | 23.00 | C | 1 |
| WED | 22 | CARNIVAL CELEBRATION | 08.00 | 22.00 | C | 1 |
| MON | 27 | ISLAND PRINCESS | 09.00 | 22.00 | C | 1 |
| TUE | 28 | CARNIVAL HORIZON | 09.00 | 22.00 | C | 1 |

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic—but important—information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Supermarket hours

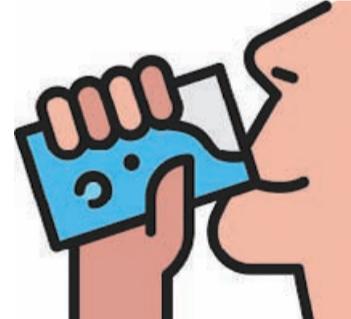


Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Electrical power



Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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Boeing's 1st astronaut flight now set for June after a review of small leak on new capsule



Boeing's Starliner capsule atop an Atlas V rocket is seen at Space Launch Complex 41 at the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station a day after its mission to the International Space Station was scrubbed because of an issue with a pressure regulation valve, Tuesday, May 7, 2024, in Cape Canaveral, Fla.

Associated Press

By MARCIA DUNN
AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Boeing is now aiming for its first astronaut launch at the beginning of June, after spending the past few weeks struggling with more problems on the space capsule.

Officials for the company and NASA said Friday that intensive reviews indicate the Starliner capsule can safely fly two test pilots to the International Space Station, despite a propulsion system leak. The small helium leak was discovered following the first launch attempt on May 6 that was scuttled by an unrelated rocket problem now fixed.

Engineers suspect a defective rubber seal the size of a shirt button, and say that even if the leak worsens, it could be managed in flight.

All of the capsule's other seals checked out, said NASA's commercial crew program manager Steve Stich, prompting managers to target June 1 for the launch.

This will be the third test flight for Starliner. Demos in

2019 and 2022 had no one aboard.

Boeing had to repeat the empty flight because of software and other flaws the first time.

If not for the Atlas V rocket's bad valve that halted the first countdown, Starliner would have launched from Cape Canaveral earlier this month with the leak first detected in orbit, according to Stich.

Flight controllers would

have managed the leak, and the astronauts would have been safe, officials stressed. Helium is used to pressurize the fuel lines of the propulsion system, which maneuvers the capsule in flight.

Engineers now know the location of the leak and "that's going to help us with improving the system in the future," said Boeing program manager Mark Nappi.

ARUBA TODAY

BONDIA ARUBA

How to reach us!

The map shows the downtown area of Aruba with several streets labeled: Weststraat, Scheepstraat, Caya G.F. Betico Croes, and Caya G.R. It highlights the locations of the Aruba Today and Bondia Aruba offices, which are situated close to each other near the Royal Plaza Mall and the L.G. Smith Boulevard. A bus terminal is also indicated on the map.

"Remember, this is a test flight. We're still learning," Nappi told reporters.

Identification of the Starliner leak led to the discovery of yet another problem "a design vulnerability" in the propulsion system in the unlikely event of a string of failures, Stich said. The team has developed work-around methods to get the capsule safely out of orbit at flight's end if such problems arise, he added.

"We're not going to fly until we're sure we're safe," NASA Associate Administrator Jim Free said..

Boeing's Starliner capsule is already years late in transporting astronauts to the International Space Station for NASA.

SpaceX has been launching crews since 2020. NASA wants both companies for taxi service so they can back each other up. □



HEALTH

DOCTOR ON DUTY

Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm
Tel. 527 4000

San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:
Oduber : Tel. 582 1780
San Nicolas:
Aloe: Tel. 584 4606

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| Police | 100 |
| Oranjestad | 527 3140 |
| Noord | 527 3200 |
| Sta. Cruz | 527 2900 |
| San Nicolas | 584 5000 |
| Police Tipline | 11141 |
| Ambulancia | 911 |
| Fire Dept. | 115 |
| Red Cross | 582 2219 |

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas 587 5900
Prof. Taxi 588 0035
Taxi D.T.S. 587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba 583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv. 280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport 524 2424
American Airlines 582 2700
Avianca 588 0059
Jet Blue 588 2244
Surinam 582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia
Relacional Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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Rapsody's brave new album, 'Please Don't Cry,' displays strength through vulnerability

By GARY GERARD HAMILTON

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — If truth has the power to set one free, then Rapsody's new album, "Please Don't Cry," has removed her from emotional imprisonment and gifted her immeasurable liberation.

"People put up a mirror for me. I sat in the mirror myself...it was the beginning of healing. Heart-broke: Why do you feel like you can't fill the void of whatever that was? Internally, why do you feel underappreciated?" questioned the three-time Grammy nominee. "And really allow myself, again, to just sit in a fire and burn. To forgive myself for some things. To accept some things. To learn to love myself."

Rapsody's not only frequently lauded by critics as the best female lyricist, but also as one of the best in the genre.

After 2019's critically-acclaimed "Eve" album, discussions by hip-hop purists erupted on social media and in barbershops near and far debating her potentially rivaling Kendrick Lamar for the lyrical throne. But the recognition hasn't translated into the commercial success of some female peers veterans like Nicki Minaj and Cardi B, or recent newcomers like Megan Thee Stallion, Latto or Ice Spice.

But her plight isn't unusual for rappers labeled as "continuous" or extremely lyrical, regardless of gender.

"I was looking at what everybody else was doing instead of worrying about myself," she said, soft-spoken throughout the interview. "I'd see comments (saying), 'She makes great music, but she'll never make it because she's not half-naked or she don't have a No. 1 hit.'

And I had to realize that those are really false measurements."

"Please Don't Cry," released in May, is by far the



Rapsody poses for a portrait on Tuesday, May 7, 2024, in New York.

Associated Press

most personal of her four studio albums. Dwindling more than 350 potential songs down to the final 22 tracks, the bulk of the production comes from HIT-BOY, BLK ODYSSY and S1, and boasts star-powered features including Erykah Badu and Lil Wayne. The regal voice of Phylicia Rashad is also sprinkled throughout.

The North Carolina native began constructing the album several years ago after a painful breakup and toward the beginning of the global coronavirus pandemic. Personal tales have always lived within her music, but the foundation of her catalogue is anchored by expert lyricism and musicality.

"I've always thought that I was authentic. But at the same time, I realized there was a level of fear there a fear of allowing myself to be seen completely. But at that time, I don't even think I completely even knew who I was," said the 41-year-old Marlanna Evans who kept Lauryn Hill's "MTV Unplugged No. 2.0" project in heavy rotation while creating, along with

an evolving Pinterest board filled with pictures and words for inspiration.

"Please Don't Cry" has a weightier R&B influence than past projects. Standout tracks include the Badu-assisted "3:AM," the lead single "Asteroids," "Stand Tall," "Faith" and "God's Light." While her razor-sharp bars still slice on songs like "Raw" with Lil Wayne and Niko Brim, the album makes its mark by entering a new territory of unapologetic vulnerability. Rapsody touches on insecurities, not having a stronger female fanbase, family members battling dementia and speculation surrounding her sexuality.

On the surprisingly transparent "That One Time," the past Stevie Wonder, Kendrick Lamar and J. Cole collaborator provides a rare glimpse into her love life and past transgressions.

"One time, I had an experience with a woman. But I also bring up that I was with somebody that wasn't available," said the Jehovah's Witness-raised artist of her relationship with a married person, while suggesting her partner wasn't

fully honest.

"I make mistakes, too things I say I would never do, and then I find myself in a situation that I'm not proud of. But in my life and the conversations I have, I know I'm not the only one." Bianca Edwards, vice president of marketing for Roc Nation, says the vulnerability displayed showcases Rapsody's security in her music and herself.

"You have to be extremely confident to bare your soul and not care what people think," said Edwards. "And on this project, I think that she bared a lot."

Always advocating for female rappers, Rapsody has consistently rejected praise meant to criticize her peers. But while there are songs like "Look What You've Done" in which she rhymes, "Don't lift me up throwin' shade/At my sisters that made it out wit' a-- and bass," she also raps, "Everything look cookie cutter/We seen enough a, that sh ain't special no more" on "Diary of a Mad Bitch."

"I see my name brought up a lot of times used to put other women down for how they choose to show

up in this art and in their life, and I'm not here for that. I'm not trying to make myself the standard. I'm just trying to make myself another example of what women in hip-hop look like to bring harmony," said Rapsody. "With 'Diary,' it was me making an observation of everybody looks the same...I know we're not clones."

But despite a profession where cosmetic enhancements are common among female rappers – along with sexually-charged lyrics that contribute to their pop stardom – the "Complexion (A Zulu Love)" artist says she's never considered altering her body.

"My question is why isn't there space for me or others who are different from what we see on a mainstream level...why don't we get those same opportunities?" asked the self-described tomboy who also suffers from Graves' disease which can change physical appearance. "I never wanted to be anything other than who I was."

Rapsody says while every artist dreams of creating a hit record, she's not willing to compromise her musical integrity or chase songs that don't feel natural to attract more fans.

"I think she already found her place," said Edwards. "I work with a lot of artists, and I've met artists that are still trying to find themselves. That's not Rap."

A tour will launch in September with five European dates and a North American leg that will run through October.

"Please Don't Cry" has fortified Rapsody's healing journey, and she's better for it. "Everybody asks me about this album, like 'How you feeling?' I say I feel really happy and I'm at peace. And this is the most free I've ever felt," she said.

"I'm not putting pressure on myself to be defined as success through other people's measurements of what that looks like." □

MLB says robot home plate umpires unlikely for 2025

By RONALD BLUM

AP Baseball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Major League Baseball says robot home plate umpires are unlikely for 2025.

"We still have some technical issues," baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred said Thursday at a news conference following an owners meeting. "We haven't made as much progress in the minor leagues this year as we sort of hoped at this point. I think it's becoming more and more likely that this will not be a go for '25." MLB has been experimenting with the automated ball-strike system in minor leagues since 2019. It is being used at all Triple-A parks this year for the second straight season, the robot alone for the first three games of each series and a human with a challenge system in the final three.

"There's a growing consensus in large part based on what we're hearing from players that the challenge form should be the form of ABS if and when we bring it to the big leagues, at least as a starting point," Manfred said. "I think that's a good decision."

After instituting a pitch clock in 2023, MLB slowed innovation this year, with only small rules adjust-



Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred speaks at a press conference following an owners meeting, Thursday, May 23, 2024, in New York.

Associated Press

ments.

"One thing we did learn with the changes that we went through last year, taking the extra time to make sure you have it right, is definitely the best approach," Manfred said. "I think we're going to use that same approach here." Manfred said discussions have not taken place with the players' association on the shape of an automated strike zone. There is little desire to call the strike zone as

defined in the rule book as a cube. The ABS currently calls strikes solely based on where the ball crosses the midpoint of the plate, 8.5 inches from the front and the back. MLB's meetings with players revealed a preference for a challenge system in order to continue to incentivize catcher framing skills. "Originally we thought everybody was going to be wholeheartedly in favor of the idea if you can get it right every single time,

that's a great idea," Manfred said. "One thing we've learned in these meetings is the players feel there could be other effects on the game that would be negative if you use it full-blown. "Players feel that a catcher that frames is part of the, if you'll let me use the word art of the game, and that if in fact framing is no longer important, the kind of players that would occupy that position might be different than they are today," Man-

fred said. "You could hypothesize a world where instead of a framing catcher who's focused on defense, the catching position becomes a more offensive player. That alters people's careers. Those are real, legitimate concerns that we need to think all the way through before we jump off that bridge."

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John Slusher, Nike's executive vice president of global sports marketing, spoke to owners about the company's much-criticized new uniforms, which will be altered for 2025. MLB and Nike announced on May 3 that uniforms will have larger lettering on the back of jerseys and individual pant customization will be available to all players beginning in 2025. "I think they appropriately took responsibility for the issues with respect to the new uniforms and the rollout of those uniforms," Manfred said. "It's the first time the owners had heard this directly from Nike. They had been consistent with me about taking responsibility." Manfred said Nike said it will address "the letters, the non-customized pants, the sweat through and the lack of matching of the grays." □

Djokovic loses Geneva semi and goes to French Open with no titles in 2024

GENEVA (AP) — Novak Djokovic will defend his French Open title in Paris still without a trophy this season after losing in the Geneva Open semifinals on Friday. The 44th-ranked Tomas Machac beat Djokovic 6-4, 0-6, 6-1 in the last clay-court event to prepare for Roland Garros, where main draw play starts on Sunday. "Of course I am worried. I haven't been playing good at all this year," Djokovic said.

His record in 2024 dropped to 14-6 overall and 0-3 in semifinals, including at the Australian Open against Jannik Sinner.

"I don't consider myself a

favorite there," the top-ranked Serb said of his chances at Roland Garros, where he's won two of the past three titles and three overall among his men's record 24 Grand Slam singles titles. "I'm going to take it match by match and see how far I can go."

Machac took his first match-point chance which came on Djokovic's serve, and clinched when Djokovic pushed a backhand long. It was the fifth time Djokovic had his service broken and he also made 27 unforced errors.

"If you play against Novak you just hope and try to play your best and see how

it looks," Machac said in an on-court interview.

Djokovic warmly greeted the Czech at the net, and smiled as he walked off court, applauding the fans. Djokovic took a medical timeout after the first set for a stomach issue.

"It was a terrible feeling with stomach and health today. It was not a great night and today as well," he said. "I don't want to take anything away from his win, he deserved it."

Machac will play his first tour final on Saturday against two-time Geneva champion Casper Ruud, the French Open runner-up for the past two years,



Novak Djokovic, of Serbia, reacts after losing a point as he plays Tomas Machac, of the Czech Republic, during their semifinal match, at the ATP 250 Geneva Open tennis tournament in Geneva, Switzerland, Friday, May 24, 2024.

Associated Press

or the unseeded Flavio Cobolli. Their semifinal did not

start on time because of a lengthy rain delay. □

Pacers put unbeaten home playoff record on the line vs. Celtics road success in Game 3

By MICHAEL MAROT

AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — The Indiana Pacers can read the numbers.

They're down 2-0 in another best-of-seven series and are heading home, where they are a perfect 6-0 during this season's playoff run. They need a win in Saturday's pivotal Game 3 to get back in this series, just as they did last week against New York. And, yes, they're facing the top-seeded Boston Celtics, who are a perfect 4-0 on the road this postseason.

The bleakest part of this equation for Indiana is the possibility of losing All-NBA guard Tyrese Haliburton. The league's assist champ departed in the third quarter of a Game 2 loss after re-injuring his left hamstring. He did not return.

Yet this Pacers team, largely composed of playoff newcomers or newcomers to high-profile postseason roles, has not blinked when others wrote them off and they do not intend to start now with so much at stake this weekend.

"Our fans give us so much energy," said Indiana forward Pascal Siakam, a midseason acquisition from Toronto where he won an NBA title. "Obviously, for



Members of the Indiana Pacers sit on the bench during the second half of Game 2 of the NBA Eastern Conference basketball finals against the Boston Celtics, Thursday, May 23, 2024, in Boston.

Associated Press

me, I'm experiencing for the first time the energy and they're so passionate about our team. We can't wait to go out there Saturday and just the energy they're going to bring to support us."

Haliburton's status could change everything. The Pacers are expecting an update on his playing status on Friday's injury report. While the injury could dampen the mood in Indy, it won't change the fact

this will be the city's biggest weekend in years.

The 108th running of the Indianapolis 500, the world's largest single-day sporting event expected to draw a crowd of nearly 300,000, is sandwiched in between Saturday's Game 3 and Monday's Game 4. Should rain force the race's first postponement since 1997, it would be rescheduled for Monday creating a wildly rare Pacers and racers Memorial Day dou-

bleheader.

The conflagration of a show built for speed, like the Pacers, isn't lost on these guys, most of whom are sharing Indy's May stage with the IndyCar stars and the Colts, who have been holding offseason workouts in town. The only missing feature is Caitlin Clark, who is on a West Coast trip with the WNBA's Indiana Fever. But make no mistake: The Pacers are eager to shake things up every bit as much

as the Greatest Spectacle in Racing with or without Haliburton.

"Like I said, losing sucks," Pacers guard Andrew Nembhard said after playing four games in seven days in three cities. "It was a long road trip. I think it will be nice for all of us to get back in our own beds. We're excited to play in front of our fans, and it's going to be a big weekend with the race in there. So we can't wait to get back on our home court."

The Celtics, meanwhile, come to town with a different kind of advantage.

They won twice at Miami in the first round before returning home to close out the Heat in five games. Then in the conference semifinals, they won twice at Cleveland before eliminating the Cavaliers in five games. If they win the next two, Boston will be back in the NBA Finals for the second time in three years, courtesy of a conference finals sweep. Clearly, the math works even if Boston doesn't expect things to go quite so smoothly.

"They were down 2-0 in a series that went to Game 7. They do a great job defending their home court," Celtics coach Joe Mazzulla said. □

Vendrame wins Giro stage with a downhill attack and Pogacar leads with one big stage left

SAPPADA, Italy (AP) — Andrea Vendrame's solo downhill attack won him the 19th stage of the Giro d'Italia while overall leader Tadej Pogacar avoided any risks on the rain-slicked roads on Friday.

The second win of Vendrame's career at the Giro followed a stage victory in 2021 for the Italian rider.

Vendrame clocked just under four hours on the undulating stage, which included three categorized climbs in the final 60 kilometers (37 miles) of the 157-kilometer (98-mile) route from Mortegliano to Sappada.

Sappada.



Vendrame got in an early

Italy's Andrea Vendrame celebrates winning the 19th stage of the Giro d'Italia cycling race from Mortegliano to Sappada, Italy, Friday, May 24, 2024.

Associated Press

breakaway and then attacked on the descent from the penultimate climb to Sella Valcalda.

Pelayo Sanchez crossed second, 54 seconds behind, and Georg Steinhauser was third, 1:07 behind. Pogacar and the other leaders finished about 15 minutes behind.

Pogacar remained 7:42 ahead of second-placed Daniel Martinez and 8:04 ahead of third-placed Geraint Thomas.

Already a two-time Tour de France champion, Pogacar is attempting to win the Giro and the Tour this year,

a feat that hasn't been achieved since 1998 by Marco Pantani.

Thomas fell with less than 10 kilometers (6 miles) to go but quickly switched bikes and caught back up to the other leaders.

Stage 20 on Saturday features the final climbs of the race over a 184-kilometer (114-mile) leg from Alpago to Bassano del Grappa, featuring two ascents of the first-category climb up to Monte Grappa, followed by a mostly downhill finish. The Giro ends in Rome on Sunday with a mostly flat stage suited for sprinters. □